

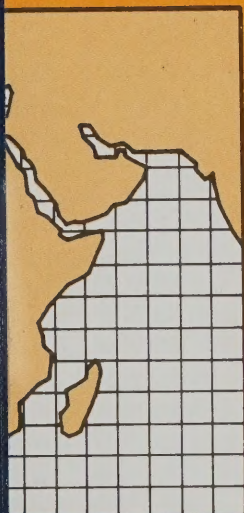
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Country Profile **Cameroon**

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Country Profile **Cameroon**



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COUNTRY PROFILE

Official name	Republic of Cameroon
Capital	Yaoundé
Topography	Very diversified; coastal plain, mountains, plateaus, hills; large mountainous arc
Climate	Equatorial southeast, dry tropical around Lake Chad
Principal crops	Cacao, coffee, cotton, bananas, peanuts, wood, rubber, tobacco; subsistence crops
Resources	Petroleum, forests, fisheries, mines, hydro electricity
Official languages	English and French
Other languages spoken	239 other languages and dialects, including Ful, Pahouin, Bamileke, Arabic, Penlil, Chadic, Adamawa
Ethnic groups	More than 200 divided in four major groups: Northern Chamite, Northern Kirdi, Western Tribes including the Bamileke, Southern Tribes mainly with the Bantu.
Religions	Animism (44%), Islam (21%), and Christianity (35%)
Dates of independence	January 1 1960 - Eastern Cameroon October 1 1961 - Western Cameroon

Date of unification constitution June 2 1972

Comparative data

	<u>Cameroon</u>	<u>Canada</u>
Area	475,440 sq km	9,976,000 sq km
Population (1985)	9.6 million	24.9 million
Population density (1983)	19.3 people/sq km	2.4 people/sq km
Urbanization (1983)	39%	75%
Population growth rate (1973-1983)	3.1%	1.2%

Life expectancy at birth (1983)	54 years	76 years
Infant mortality rate (1983)	116/1000 live births	9/1000 live births
Daily per capita calorie supply as percentage of requirement (1983)	91%	129%
Adult literacy rate (1983)	76.6%	99%
Enrolment in primary school as % of age group		
total	107%	104%
boys	117%	105%
girls	97%	103%
Percentage of labor force in		
agriculture	83%	5%
industry	7%	29%
services	10%	66%
% of population under 15 years	41.5%	23.2%
GNP per capita (1983)	US \$820	US \$12,310
Average annual growth of GNP (1965-1983)	2.7%	2.5%
Average annual inflation rate (1973-1983)	12.6%	9.4%
External public debt as % of GNP (1983)	26.7%	1.35%
Debt service as % of GNP (1983)	3.1%	4.96%
Current account balance (1983) (US\$)	-\$289 million	\$1 380 million
Principal exports	Cacao, coffee, wood, petroleum	
Principal imports	Manufactured goods, transport machinery and materiel, food products	
Principal trading partners	France, United States, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and the Netherlands	
Exports to Canada	Coffee	
Imports from Canada	Construction machinery and equipment, aircraft, trucks, drilling, excavating and mining machinery, railway and rolling stock	

COUNTRY PROGRAM

Review of the Canadian Program

The first Canadians to settle in Cameroon were missionaries. After the Second World War, Canadian religious communities assumed responsibility for a sizeable sector of education. Protestant missionaries also began to settle in western Cameroon and in the north of the country. The most well-known of all these Canadian missionaries is Paul-Emile Cardinal Léger, who worked there from 1967 to 1979.

The official status of French-English bilingualism and the existence of a multicultural society have made for a community of interests between Canada and Cameroon, which, among other things, was reflected in the establishment of the first Canadian embassy in Francophone Africa and the development of an extensive program of cooperation which includes a diversity of projects. The most important sectors of assistance to which Canada is committed are rail and road transportation, port facilities, hydroelectric energy, forestry and human resources.

Canadian assistance is provided through three main channels: bilateral, or government-to-government contributions; multilateral, in which Canada funds international organizations administering projects in the country; and special programs support, in which Canada funds non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as church groups, which have projects in the country.

Canada's program for cooperation with Cameroon is one of the oldest in Africa and is the largest in Francophone Africa. Initially directed mainly towards the education sector, it gradually extended to the public health sector. It began in 1962 when CIDA sent some 75 teachers and academic advisers to work in various public secondary schools, then granted some 200 scholarships to young Cameroonians for study in Canada. In 1968, non-governmental organizations stepped in, establishing credit unions, among other things. At about the same time, bilateral programs were initiated in the health sector, by means of a water supply project combined with one to combat endemic diseases. The cooperation program was then progressively expanded to meet more economically-oriented needs, mainly in the rural infrastructure sector (traditional fishing, rural electrification and forestry sub-sector) and especially in the transportation sector (road equipment, the port of Douala, the Trans-Cameroon railway and railway equipment).

Industrial Cooperation programs began in 1978 and provide an illustration of the "mutual interest" dimension of the cooperation program. Institutional Cooperation began its activities in Cameroon a short while ago. The International Development Research Centre supported the efforts of the African Institute for Economic and Social Development in Cameroon, which is developing pedagogical tools based on an improved information and exchange system to be used by youth trainers and rural development workers. The total value of current ongoing projects is \$876,640.

Bilateral Support

From 1962 to 1985, bilateral disbursements in favour of Cameroon amounted to more than \$150 million. More than two thirds of that amount were allocated

during the period 1976-1981, which is indicative of a definite acceleration in activities. The major orientations of the CIDA program are intended to adapt Canadian aid to the new Cameroonian context of duality: a poor country with traditional sectors in deeper trouble and affecting the majority of the population, but also a country with an increased financial capacity (revenue from petroleum) and with more dynamic modern sectors. The program therefore stresses those development needs that will help Cameroon to eliminate two major bottlenecks that are impeding its development: the inadequacy of rural development and the shortage of qualified human resources. The first objective is to stem the rural exodus and to improve the lot of the rural population. Secondly, the program addresses areas of mutual interest by striving to facilitate the transfer of technology through program aid.

Agriculture

Agriculture (a term used here to include silviculture, livestock raising and fishing) in Cameroon is the most dynamic sector in the country in terms of its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GNP) and employment. In fact, it is the second largest source of revenue, after petroleum. In 1980-1981, the International Monetary Fund estimated that agriculture accounted for 28 per cent of the GNP of Cameroon, that it employed 83 per cent of the work force and that it supplied 24 per cent of the total revenue from exports. Since 1982, agricultural production has been seriously affected by drought, mainly in the south of the country, but also in the north. And yet, the agricultural potential of Cameroon is favourable because of the diversity of its natural conditions and its climatic zones. The Government of Cameroon looks upon agriculture as the keystone of its economy and is striving to increase production and productivity of food and export crops. There are two types of agriculture: subsistence and agro-industrial. The subsistence type of agricultural production includes cereals and starchy crops, such as millet, sorghum, maize, rice, wheat, cassava, macabo-taro, yams, potatoes, beans and plantain. Agro-industrial farming includes the major crops: cocoa, coffee, cotton, bananas, tobacco, pineapples, pepper and tea. These crops can be considered only from the point of view of the quantity produced and their development, since the largest part is intended for the export market and prices are severely affected by the unfavorable international situation. For the past few years, we have been witnessing a systematic lowering of prices, which entails a reduction in the intake of the foreign currencies needed to purchase imported goods. CIDA's objectives with regard to rural development are to curb the rural exodus, to ensure a better distribution of income, to prevent the onset of food deficits, and to satisfy certain basic needs. Bilateral aid to agriculture is part of this general context. Its activities are mainly related to rural electrification, the modernization of the fishing industry, forestry projects, and the improvement of transportation systems. Nevertheless, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) has provided support for eight agricultural research projects since 1974. A line of credit, worth \$50 million, parallel to that of the EDC, is used for large development projects, some of which are in agro-industry.

Fishing

Deep-sea fishing, both traditional and industrial, is going through a rather difficult crisis. Problems relating to territorial limits and fishing

rights, to obsolete equipment and the absence of refrigerated storage facilities, are resulting in a certain stagnation of production.

The establishment of a fisheries development office is intended to raise the standard of living of the traditional fisherman through modernization of traditional fishing.

Energy

Cameroon is one of the largest producers of electricity in Francophone Africa. Also, since the beginning of petroleum production in 1979, this form of energy has become a major force for growth and the most dynamic sector of the Cameroon economy. Wood is used for heating and cooking, and it continues to meet a large part of the demand for energy in rural areas. Production and distribution of electric power are the responsibility of the National Power Corporation of Cameroon (SONEL) since 1974. SONEL operates the hydroelectric plant at Edea and the Douala and Yaoundé power transmission system, along with a number of secondary centres. It operates a total of twenty-three main power plants, nineteen of which are thermal and three hydraulic, with an installed capacity of 582 megawatts (1982-1983).

An independent publicly-owned corporation, the National Hydrocarbons Corporation (SNH), was created in 1980 to ensure the rational use of the country's hydrocarbon resources. To this end, SNH has full responsibility for implementing government policy in the petroleum and gas sector.

Cameroon is not a member of OPEC, and is therefore not bound to respect any production and/or export quotas. Its petroleum production has been increasing rapidly in the past few years. From an initial volume of 0.12 million metric tonnes in 1977-1978, its production, according to estimates, stands at about the 7.6 million mark in 1984-1985.

CIDA's specific objectives in terms of energy are:

- to contribute to providing the people of Cameroon with greater access to electricity, by increasing the number of villages and rural stations linked to the interconnected network;
- to sustain industrial development, especially forestry in the southern part of the country;
- to increase hydraulic power output by the 1990s.

The Agency has spent \$20.7 million on a rural electrification project in the south-central part of the country. This project is being financed jointly with the Export Development Corporation, or EDC (\$21 million). Its implementation calls for the construction of two electrical transformer stations and the laying of transmission lines. A second phase was added and an additional amount of \$21.9 million has been allocated. This second phase seeks the same objectives, but includes the services of 30 experts per year, the granting of 120 fellowships per year and the equivalent of ten training sessions a year. This project is jointly financed by CIDA - EDC - SONEL.

Forestry

Between 15 and 20 million hectares of the land are covered with forests, which are the third source of revenue for the country's economy. The

precarious nature of the channels of communication and the congestion in the port of Douala for a long time were responsible for the limited exploitation of this sector; only eight million hectares were being worked. About 40 per cent of the forested area was allocated to some 95 firms, including four large corporations. Policies calling for monitoring, reforestation and training are now being implemented. The most widely exported species are azobe (well ahead of the others), sapele, and obeche. Exports of these primary materials are largely influenced by the international situation. Early in the eighties, production had increased as the result of a higher domestic demand for wood that accompanied the rapid expansion of the housing sector. On the other hand, exports of undressed and semi-processed lumber are down mainly because of lower world demand. Almost half of the total production is now being processed locally. Studies are under way to take stock of the forest resources, and their findings will be used as the basis for a feasibility study for an industrial complex that will produce semi-processed lumber.

Canada's aid to the forestry sector seeks three main objectives:

- to increase the Cameroonian capacity to manage its forestry development by concentrating on knowledge of the resources;
- to create new jobs by supporting local SMB in the lumber industry;
- to slow the desertification process in the north of the country and support the use of biomass as a source of energy.

These objectives will be secured by means of the following projects:

An initial forestry project (institutional support) with two five-year phases, extending from 1980 to 1990. It will require disbursements of \$19.7 million. Its purpose is to provide the support of technical experts and equipment for the preparation of rational forestry development plans, and to assist small and medium sized businesses in Cameroonian forestry. This project includes technical assistance, training, technical studies and equipment aspects. A second project (\$4.9 million) is intended to foster more effective management of the forest potential. It calls for the gathering of basic data for preparation of a national forestry inventory, for which purpose photomapping of approximately 110,000 sq km will be carried out in the southeastern zone.

Transportation

The development of an adequate transportation network is of vital importance to Cameroon. The serious shortcomings of the present system are an obstacle to progress in other economic sectors. The authorities are aware of this priority, and this is why they are allocating 21 per cent of total investments to the transportation and communication sector. The development of an efficient road, rail, maritime and air network is the result of sustained work and very sizeable investments.

Aware of the importance of this sector to the national economy, CIDA is financing large related projects. First of all, by supporting the Trans-Cameroon, Canada is striving to improve the operational effectiveness

of the rail system and to expand its capacity. The project, which consists in three successive phases, calls for the re-alignment of the Yaoundé-Otele, Douala-Edea and Douala-Yaoundé sections of the railway. The project includes the supply of more than 600 cars and rail construction equipment, as well as the construction of five viaducts. Several other countries and international financial institutions are cooperating with the funding. Modernization of the port of Douala is another project in which Canada has participated. Begun in 1976, work was completed in 1981 at a cost of approximately \$120 million, with CIDA having contributed \$36 million for supervision of the work, the supply of a dredger, a floating dock, superstructures and technical assistance.

With respect to the highway system, Canada supplied trucks and graders for maintenance of unpaved roads. With the completion of the Yaoundé access project, it also finished construction of an asphalt road between Douala and Yaoundé. Its participation included the completion of some 20 km of roadway, structural work and a weigh station.

Education

Since achieving independence, Cameroon has been making massive investments in the education sector. Indeed, its rate of schooling is the highest in Africa. Its schools have trained skilled personnel who have gradually replaced foreign technical advisers. The literacy rate is estimated at 76.6 per cent. Education is dispensed by the government, by missionaries and by private institutions. Instruction in the schools is free and the government subsidizes the other institutions. In order to reduce regional disparities, the government has begun a process to decentralize the system, and in this connection has established five regional university campuses. The shortage of equipment and the inadequacy of the libraries have a somewhat limiting effect on progress in this area. On the whole Cameroon has set up an educational and schooling system that is the envy of all of Africa.

CIDA objectives in this area are to contribute to the training of technicians in rural areas, of technical and vocational teachers, and of middle and senior managers to meet certain requirements in the public and private sectors. The program also includes a rural environment training project. Specific projects call for the participation of women, in recognition of the prime importance of their role in rural development.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS SUPPORT

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Through its Special Program Branch, CIDA encourages Canadian volunteer organizations to participate in international cooperation undertakings. The volunteer sector is very active in Cameroon and receives considerable support from CIDA. In this connection, more than \$3 million of Agency funds have been paid each year since 1983-1984 to Canadian non-governmental organizations and institutions for the implementation of many local-level projects. Subsidies were granted for the establishment of a food and nutrition program for pre-school children, for rural development activities in the Minta region and for the construction of a rehabilitation centre. Projects are related to health, education, water, community development, cooperatives and

agriculture. During fiscal year 1984-1985, twelve NGOs were given \$1.4 million for completion of forty-six projects, with a total value in excess of \$9 million. Among the most active, we should mention the Club 2/3 with ten projects, the Roncalli International Foundation with seven projects, Cardinal Léger and his Endeavours with six projects. OXFAM-Quebec is implementing five, and Care Canada four projects.

Institutional Cooperation and Development Services (ICDS)

The recent ICDS programme has been marked by two noteworthy projects for assistance in rural areas: one was relating to the development of cooperatives and the other to training. During fiscal year 1984-1985, Institutional Cooperation paid \$1.5 million to some fifteen institutions for twenty projects, the total value of which is almost \$5 million. ENAP (Quebec School of Public Administration), the Ecole des Hautes-Etudes commerciales (School of Higher Commercial Studies) and the University of Guelph are engaged in institutional support projects. The Fédération des caisses populaires Desjardins and the Co-operative Union of Canada are involved in projects to set up savings and credit cooperatives in the Yaoundé region and in western Cameroon. Other organizations have sent cooperants, and as a result, some thirty volunteers are at work in Cameroon. CIDA has spent about \$900,000 on this volunteer program. CIDA contributions of \$1.5 million have been committed for projects for training human resources in cooperation with Canadian educational institutions, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, and the Douala Technical College. Through 'country focus' projects, whereby Canadian institutions implement CIDA-initiated projects.

BUSINESS COOPERATION

Parallel program aid is intended to accelerate the development process in Cameroon, while fostering the creation of a commercial and industrial strategy that will benefit both countries. Under this program, CIDA has already committed the sum of \$29 million in less than one year, and even higher amounts are being forecast. Among other things, CIDA participated in funding the Yaoundé water supply project jointly with the Export Development Corporation (EDC) with contributions of \$17 million and \$27 million respectively. Moreover, CIDA has agreed to participate in the development of small and medium-sized businesses in forestry.

The program for industrial cooperation with Cameroon began in 1979. The Canadian program is engaged in the pursuit of mutual and reciprocal interests. Since the beginning, the industrial cooperation program has provided support for eighty-nine projects totalling \$5.5 million. Cameroon is the principal beneficiary of the industrial cooperation program in Francophone Africa. The first Canadian-Cameroonian firm, the Cameroon Logistics Corporation, has now been established. Under the terms of an agreement reached by the Canadian Export Association and the National Centre of Small and Medium Enterprises, a Canadian expert has been assigned to promote the development of this aspect of activities. The first event of its kind to take place in North America, the Cameroon Economic Summit, held successively in Ottawa, Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal in May 1985, allowed several other likely projects to be identified.

MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE

Canada also contributes to United Nations organizations and to other international financial institutions active in Cameroon. It played a leadership role among donors when it participated in 1972 in the establishment of the African Development Fund by the African Development Bank. Having paid \$17.8 million in 1977-1978, Canada became the largest subscriber to the fund.

Canada also contributed \$13.25 million in 1984-1985 to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); \$149.9 million to the World Food Program (WFP); \$59 million to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP); and \$10.25 million to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities.

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